

## Lend a Helping Hand to America's Veterans...Be a Volunteer

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[www.va.gov/visns/visn02](http://www.va.gov/visns/visn02)

[www.va.gov/visns/visn02/vet/volunteer.html](http://www.va.gov/visns/visn02/vet/volunteer.html)

The VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York has a comprehensive and active voluntary service program. Volunteers from across the state work at their local facilities and in the community, helping deliver veteran health services through various volunteer activities or through donations from community and service organizations.

Our Network has over 3,500 volunteers who donate more than 491,000 hours of their time. This equates to 273 full-time employees or more than \$8 million. The value of the VA volunteers' contributions in dollars and cents is only a small part of their total worth. The motivation and dedication to this nation's veterans are priceless.

Our volunteers are integral to our success. They provide a wide range of supplemental support and financial assistance to programs for our veteran patients throughout the year. If you are interested in being a volunteer, please let us know.



### Volunteer Activities

Over the years, the VA Voluntary Service program has evolved into the largest centrally directed volunteer program in the federal government. Volunteers perform a variety of duties at VA medical centers, national cemeteries, community based outpatient clinics, state nursing homes, and offstation VA sites. At medical centers, their roles range from traditional ones, such as escorting patients and reading and writing letters, to creative activities,

such as teaching arts and crafts and assisting with administrative work. As VA has expanded its care of patients into the community, volunteers now assist VA staff in such settings as hospice programs, foster care, home-based primary care and outreach centers.

Volunteers have been particularly active in supporting community programs aimed at reaching and serving the homeless. Volunteers also have become an integral part of national and local "showcase events" aimed at introducing persons with



disabilities back to "mainstream" activities. These include the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (the largest wheelchair athletic meet in the world), the National Disabled Veterans Golden Age Games, and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Corporate volunteers play a strong role in these events, setting the pace for the future along with a strong and growing youth volunteer program that is introducing teenagers and college students to careers as well as to community service.

Whatever your interests may be, the VA has almost unlimited volunteer opportunities available.



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